



Council Meeting

**Thursday, 15th
December, 2022**

HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Hastings Borough Council to be held at the Council Chamber, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3UY, on Thursday, 15th December, 2022 at 6.00 pm at which meeting the business specified below is proposed to be transacted.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Legal Officer

Muriel Matters House
Breeds Place
Hastings

8 December 2022

AGENDA

5. Questions (if any) from:
- a) Members of the public under Rule 11
 - b) Councillors under Rule 12

Note: Nothing contained in this agenda or in the attached reports and minutes of committees constitutes an offer or acceptance of an offer or an undertaking or contract by the Borough Council

Questions from members of the public under Rule 11

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Bea Rogers</p>	<p>What budgetary provision has been made for the enforcement of safety rules in Alexandra Park:</p> <p>A) With the current situation where there is illegal traffic.</p> <p>B) In the event that a cycle route is created through the park.</p>	<p>Councillor Roark:</p> <p>The enforcement of the byelaws relating to Alexandra Park comes under the existing Warden service budget; this will continue to be the case if a shared cycle path is designated in Alexandra Park.</p> <p>As with most public organisations at present, Hastings Borough Council needs to be using its resources in a targeted way. If a new shared cycle path is designated in Alexandra Park, then it will be necessary to have a heightened Warden presence in the park, at least in the initial period, to help users of the shared route get used to the new design. To date, patrolling the park for “illegal traffic” has not been a priority of the Warden service – though they have responded to reports of cyclists in the park with increased patrols on occasions, this did not yield enough evidence to warrant a sustained presence.</p> <p>However, the council has committed to providing a heightened Warden presence in Alexandra Park for the first 6 months following the introduction and implementation of a designated shared cycle path in Alexandra Park, with the presence of the Wardens being kept under regular review; this 6-month period will be extended if necessary.</p> <p>In this period, the Warden service will patrol the route and the wider park to engage with cyclists and pedestrians who present a safety concern to others and with cyclists who are not using the designated route. A specific timetable of patrols will be drawn up once the route has been procured and an assessment has been made on the enforcement priorities at that time. The scheduling of warden patrols may be targeted and responsive over the initial 6-month period, depending on the use of the path and on any complaints received or issues seen by officers.</p>

Questions from Councillors under Rule 12

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Councillor Hilton</p>	<p>Could you provide the estimated cost in lost parking revenue from offering free parking in all our council car parks on four Thursdays in December from 4.00 pm? Was Priory Meadow consulted before deciding on this timing as apparently it is only opening late in the week before Christmas?</p>	<p>Councillor Roark:</p> <p>The Thursday free parking after 4pm for late night shopping has been a concession for well over 10 years. Historically this has been in conjunction with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and used to include on- street parking until a couple of years ago.</p> <p>In recent years the decision has been delayed as ESCC became slower at responding and confirming that they will also be providing the concession, until last year when they stopped doing it altogether. Because of pay by phone, which accounts for at least 50% of all transactions, there are now deadlines as to when these sorts of concessions can be programmed in as all local authorities have different requirements. To meet this deadline the concession was agreed in October of this year.</p> <p>It is difficult to calculate the estimated loss of revenue because this parking concession has been in place for the previous 10 years, meaning that our income was basically zero on the same Thursdays last year. In order to answer this question officers have calculated the income on the Thursdays in November of this year and across the 4 Thursdays, and once VAT has been removed, the income was an average of £578 after 4pm.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that this year Priory Meadow is only doing late night Christmas Shopping on the week leading up to Christmas whereas traditionally they have opened every Thursday night in December as well as the week leading up to Christmas Day. However, the concession still allows residents to go into town or the old town to do some shopping after 4pm and park for free.</p>

		<p>Next October we will need to decide again whether to continue with the concession. Officers will try to get an earlier steer from Priory Meadow to see if they are likely to open the same hours again.</p>
<p>Councillor Collins</p>	<p>St Mary's in the Castle has been offered for sale or lease on the Hastings Borough Council website. On what basis will the decision to sell or lease be made, and by whom?</p>	<p>Councillor Barnett:</p> <p>The council is inviting bids of interest from those who share our vision of retaining St Mary in the Castle as a key cultural asset for the town, as well as looking for a sustainable and long-term plan. We want to ensure this beautiful building is kept safe and invested in, so future generations of Hastings' residents and visitors can come and enjoy, be inspired, and contribute to the creative legacy Hastings is building.</p> <p>The decision to sell or grant a lease will be made in line with the General Financial Authorisations set out in Part 9 of the Constitution (Financial Rules) and would be dependent on the level of rent or sale price but is likely to meet the requirements for a Cabinet decision.</p>
<p>Councillor Claffenden</p>	<p>How many roles in the street cleansing team are currently filled with agency or temp workers?</p>	<p>Councillor Roark:</p> <p>The number of agency staff used by the street cleansing service differs from week to week and is influenced by a number of factors including service demand, current staff absence, and agency capacity. At present we are using between 4-5 agency staff daily. This number can and will fluctuate as we head toward the spring and summer seasons.</p>

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<p>Councillor Jobson</p>	<p>Considering that we are experiencing constant local flooding has there been any constructive follow up with Southern Water in relation to fixing the blocked drainage pipes and the Pelham Beach outflow extension and what can you tell us about Southern Water's plans to mitigate future flooding in the Town centre?</p>	<p>Councillor Barnett:</p> <p>Southern Water have accepted responsibility for managing the main sewer that takes water flowing from Alexandra Park under the Town Centre to the sea. The outflow there was damaged some time ago in storms and a scheme is now being designed to reinstate the pipe taking the water out to sea again.</p> <p>This is scheduled to be done in the Spring. Meanwhile, to reduce risks of flooding, a temporary pipe has been installed and the pumps for this are located in the compound at the top of Pelham Beach. This will be removed when the main outfall is reinstated. Recent heavy rain led to flooding in South Terrace and we are working with residents to hold SW for account for the damage caused and for any additional mitigation measures found necessary to prevent this happening again.</p>
<p>Councillor Carr</p> <p>Page 4</p>	<p>As Christmas shoppers come into the Town Centre, Cornwallis Street Car Park sits empty, save for large trenches dug across it, losing the council revenue and taking away a well used car park at a peak time of year. Work that I was told should have started on this site for a new hotel has yet to begin.</p> <p>Could you please tell me if a contractor has now been appointed to complete these works and what the time frame is for start and completion of this project? Further could you please tell me if this project is still within its previously discussed budgets and if the council is likely to still see a good financial return on its investment given both the rise in building costs and inflation?</p>	<p>Councillor Barnett:</p> <p>This project has been retendered after only one satisfactory tender was received recently. A report will come to Cabinet on timescales and budgets when these new tenders have been evaluated.</p>